

DOES MORTAL MAN

Shape and Control His own Destiny:
Or Is He the Creature of
Fate?

For twenty years I have been a fatalist, believing with Thomas Carlyle, that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his footsteps;" also, that "where we purpose to go but row, we're steered by fate." In the first place we are forced into this world without wish or desire, and are given certain characteristics that compel us to live in conformity with them; and we are born with latent talents dependent on favorable conditions or development; with disposition and temperament that reveal our natural tendencies and the probable direction in which fate will steer us. We are very far from universal freedom, for the first start, for the universal freedom of the free pump our breath and blood, direct our food, and compel us to think. All these movements are involuntary or mechanical, what we thus far but puppets in the hands of Nature. We possess consciousness, and what is known as free will, but our desires are the only things that have power to rouse us, and to impel us to do; and a man has no more to do with his desires than with the pumping of his breath and blood, for they come, or rise up within him, as involuntary manner; and the strongest of them force him into action for their gratification. If mortal man had no desires he would have no incentive to act; so his desires which he does not create—the same being spontaneous, or produced by his environment, are the regulators of his conduct.

I never had the least desire to be a Methodist minister, but thousands of men have had, and that desire drove them into the pulpit, and right here I wish to say that freedom of choice is a fallacy, because what I called choice is simply the strongest of one of many desires; and when a man is moved to act by such a desire, I ask where and how does it assume the appearance of a free act? There is no such thing as free will in any human being; never was and never will be, for as I have shown, man the involuntary thinker, the human machine run by universal forces, is controlled by his desires, and does not, nor cannot act independent of them. He is a puppet in every sense of the word, for he is the eternal slave of conditions, the ever responsive factor of desire. What desire dominates he does not know; at any rate he tries. That desire is strengthened or weakened by judgment and choice, but he does not deny, but the strongest when viewed in the light of self-interest, is prejudicial, or perverted reason, is what induces action. The will is called into play by that desire which exerts the greatest influence upon him, and he is not free in his choice or selection of desires, because many things act upon it, and affect his choice. The will actually has no more freedom than a weather vane, for the law of desire compels it to turn in the direction of least resistance in all its determinations; and pleasurable results it chooses instead of pain, and it chooses to insure misery. I wish to make this point plain because the only argument that the opponents of free will present worth notice or consideration, is that the will has power of deliberation and choice upon comparison of desires.

Apparently on first view it has, but the will is not free in an absolute sense to choose anything, for it is influenced in a thousand ways by conditions and environments, and acts as it must act, free from free circumstances.

When life is pleasant and satisfactory the will seeks to prolong it, but when joy and gladness are absent, and hope has disappeared, the will seeks the destruction of the body as naturally as it seeks to prolong it, under the other conditions.

Said Lord Byron: "My whole life has been a contest since the day I gave me birth * * * and at it times have found the struggle hard and thought of shaking off my burden of clay." It is the conditions under which one finds himself in life that compel the will to choose death in preference to further existence; so henceforth when this fact is considered, let no superficial thinker ponder about free will. P. B. Randolph condemned self-delusion in the strongest terms, and yet his "free will" was so influenced by conditions that acted upon it, he ended his life with his own hand.

Let us reflect again on the words of Carlyle: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his footsteps." What man knows when a fatalistic act will be his? What will he do a week hence or a year hence? Who can write autobiography in advance? Can he predict the hour of death, the cause, and the final resting place for his body? No one, for fate determines all these things, and reveals nothing before it occurs. If man shaped and controlled his own destiny, he would be able to advance all these things and be able to live in accordance with his desires, also as long as he lived, and his environments decide and die when fate decrees, without being notified in advance.

Said O. W. Holmes "Our lives are but a string of guesses at the future." The wisest guess is that there is no free will, let no man affirm that he shapes his own destiny. Said John W. Draper, "Men are not free to choose events, only events control men," and as puppets in the hands of universal Nature, we all die in consequence of impelling causes. What we regard as a good man deserves no more credit for being good, than a bad man deserves censure; both playing the part in life which fate decided without

power to do otherwise, for as Ingersoll said "The impossible never occurs" and it is utterly impossible for all men to be or to think alike. Who makes the variations; the men themselves? Not much; and every man who walks this earth in just what he is from successful failure. The mind of childhood is filled with errors and falsehoods by religious teachers, and bigotry and prejudice ever after have their influence on the will, compelling it to kill Jews in Russia or Christians in Persia, and thinking recently that prevalent among the various sects every where.

Some men are born into this world with their happiness ready made, as Holmes expresses it, for Nature gave them genial temperaments, sunny dispositions and a tendency to be light hearted and joyous; but others like Byron are born with misery ready made and with him are compelled to think and say:

"O life! Thou art a galling load
Along a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I."

The lash of man's misery is his thought, but being an involuntary thinker there is no escape for him. How nice it would be if a man could stop thinking when his thoughts are unpleasant and distressing, but no, he must think on and endure his hell as best he can, for only in nature or artificial sleep can thinking be suspended.

"How will you keep my brain from thinking?" asked the physician by the Pope. Thinking can be stopped only in two ways, by sleep or by death. The Pope considered for a moment this part of my physical machinery.

Said O. W. Holmes, "The more we examine the mechanism of thought, the more we shall see that automatic unconscious action of the mind enters largely into all its processes."

An idea in the brain is an impression made on living tissue, which is the seat of active nutritive processes. The brain must be fed or it cannot work. Four great vessels flood every part of it with hot scarlet blood, which carries at once fire and fuel to each of its cells. Stop this supply, and we drop senseless.

This is one of the best descriptions of our thinker ever made, and those who feel inclined to connect a human spirit with man's thought, can labor with this idea before proving it. His "scarlet blood" automatically forced to the brain makes us think, and think we are free. And as long as this automatic process continues, we are assured consciousness and the necessary power to play our fatalistic parts in the tragedy of life.

So repeat, human beings are nothing but machines, run by automatic forces, and they have no more to do with their destiny than they had with their origin.

Nature produced the machine, set them in motion, and runs them until accidentally destroyed or worn out, and that is all there is to human life. Our individual careers are shaped for us, and fate decides our individual destinies, and as long as we are seen in the movements of the heaven by bodies.

Unconscious or unconscious action, all are the same in Nature's estimation, for countless change without lotus and purpose in all things can be seen in the movements of the heaven by bodies.

"For life is a riddle that none can guess;
And whether it curse or whether it bless,
Depends on no endeavor;
For the spider of fate with a thousand
Sits weaving its web for human flies;
And the flies buzz on forever!"

CHANNING SEVERANCE

CHEAPE LANDS

For Homekeepers and Colonies.
The country along the Cotton Belt is rapidly being settled, and is one of the best places in the world for homekeepers and colonies. The country is rich in soil, and is well watered, and is one of the best places in the world for homekeepers and colonies. The country is rich in soil, and is well watered, and is one of the best places in the world for homekeepers and colonies.

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Short Letters

Timbo, Ark., July 10, 1903.

Dear Bros. Moore and Hughes:—Enclosed find P. O. \$1.00 for "Dog Fennel in the Orient." I see you have gone to print with it. I understand you do not want any money for it in advance, but I live three and a half miles from the postoffice and send it while I can. John D. FARRIS.

Cannelville, Pa., July 14, 1903.

Mr. James Hughes:—Please find P. O. for \$1.00 to pay for one "Dog Fennel." Several of my Liberal friends will send for it later. I have been talking for a while, but we hold all we got. I enclose clipping from Pittsburg Sunday Gazette, wherein a preacher owns that telegrams and railroads will take him toward stopping the deadly feds in Kentucky than religion and churches will. Fraternally, H. AUSTIN.

Denton, Tex., July 10, 1903.

Hon. C. C. Moore:—Dear Sir—I am a reader of your valuable paper, the Blade. I hope to produce a work this fall entitled, "If I could be a God, I would be a God." I shall do all I can to help the Blade—what I could regard as the organ of thought and it is well to consider for a moment this part of my physical machinery.

Said O. W. Holmes, "The more we examine the mechanism of thought, the more we shall see that automatic unconscious action of the mind enters largely into all its processes."

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CHANNING SEVERANCE

Meriden, Conn., July 4, 1903.

Dear Editor Worker Hughes:—

Having been supplied with a sample copy of the Blue Grass Blade several years ago, I tried to express my pleasure with a draft and a wish that our next issue would be the Woman's Twentieth Century, and was admonished with Bro. Moore's wit and fun putting a sharper edge on the Blade than I thought possible.

I therefore, enclose a few more "dog fennel" samples, which may like the style of that old shaggy watch "Dog Fennel of the Orient," which is a deathly grip on the hand of the orthodox Christian.

If all of your subscribers will be honest and pay for their paper, the Blade will be able to raise the flag of the dark ages, to build untold castles in the air, cathedrals, churches and convents on this earth, to rob, swindle and kill the people for the glory of a barbarous God. Go on for good luck.

Sincerely yours,
N. F. GRISWOLD.

Ontario, Ore., July 7, 1903.

C. C. Moore:—

Enclosed you will find \$1.00 P. O. for renewal of your subscription to the Blade. I would be lonesome without your paper. Am glad that you have gotten land at \$5 per acre, and also have improved or partly cleared land at \$10 and \$15 per acre up. Some fine prospects for colonies—tracts of 2,000 or 5,000 acres at \$1 to \$10 per acre—find money in this for a good organizer. Fruit and truck land, the famous peach and tomato belt of East Texas at \$10 to \$25 per acre up. Write us for information about cheap lands, excursion dates, also literature descriptive of this great country and let us help you find a home that will cost you no more than the rent you pay every year.

E. W. LADDA, G. P. & T. A., Cotton Belt Route, St. Louis, Mo.

THE TIME OF AWAKENING.

Our Katy publications are decidedly interesting and tend to enlighten the mind. The possibilities are great along the line of the M. K. & R. Y. We shall be glad to put you on several attractive pamphlets bearing on business chances in Missouri, Kansas, Indian Territory and Texas.

"KATY,"

602 Wainwright Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

"DO IT NOW!"

Don't wait till your friends tell of these things, but write us for pamphlets entitled "Business Chances," "The Union Issue," "The New House That Jack Built," "Texas," "Old Mexico" and other Katy publications. We shall be glad to put you on several attractive pamphlets bearing on business chances at points along the line of the Katy. Address

600 Wainwright Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

Send your order for Dog Fennel in the Orient and Persia, how many you like. Will be ready for delivery in about three weeks.

Atheism.

The most advanced thinkers and scholars of the world have ever been Atheists. Why? Because nature everywhere proclaims a want of thought, purpose, design or reason, more apparent in this truth than any

Illinois Central Railroad

SUMMER EXCURSION TICKETS NOW ON SALE VIA—

ST. PAUL, MINNEAPOLIS AND THE NORTHWEST.

COLORADO, UTAH, GRAYSON SPRINGS, DAWSON SPRINGS, AND CERULEAN SPRINGS, KY.

AT REDUCED RATES.

VERY CHEAP RATES TO CALIFORNIA AND RETURN. ACCOUNT G. A. R., JULY 31 TO AUGUST 13, INCLUSIVE.

THROUGH PERSONALLY CONDUCTED EXCURSION SLEEPERS TO CALIFORNIA, TEXAS, NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA, TWICE A WEEK.

REDUCED ONEWAY COLONIST AND HOME SEEKERS' EXCURSION RATES TO POINTS SOUTH AND WEST FIRST AND SECOND TUESDAYS IN EACH MONTH. WRITE THE UNDER-SIGNED FOR CIRCULAR DESCRIPTIVE OF LANDS IN TEXAS, SOUTH. ASK LOCAL TICKET AGENTS FOR THROUGH TICKETS AND FURTHER INFORMATION, OR ADDRESS

F. W. HARLOW

Division Passenger Agent

Louisville Kentucky

We Are Going To

Offer the low Round Trip rate of \$45.50 from Memphis to San Francisco,

CALIFORNIA

For the occasion of the National Encampment

G. A. R.

Tickets on sale August 1st to 14th:

Final Return Limit, October 15th.

STOPOVERS ALLOWED.

Further information on request.

Geo. H. Lee, G. P. A., Little Rock, Ark.

G. D. Bacon, D. P. A., Cincinnati, Ohio.

Belief by the religious world, founded on ignorance, as all such beliefs are, is not evidence.

PARISH B. LADD

Alameda, California.

Denton, Ohio, July 6, 303.

James E. Hughes:—

Dear Sir—As soon as Dog Fennel is ready I shall order at least five copies I presume Bro. Moore will tell how Lo's wife looks by this time.

Yours truly,
GEO. O. ROBERTS.

Answer—I will tell you in Dog Fennel exactly how Lo's wife looks.

SISTER CLOSSE HEARD FROM

Webster City, Ia., July 12, 303.

Dear Brother Moore:—

I enclose you clipping from Brother James Driscoll's paper for information in regard to the number of churches erected daily in the United States, which I trust you will find time to touch with reliable data.

Our new home is nearing completion, and I shall be enjoying the fascinating delights of moving, hence am too busy to contribute for the present.

Hope the forthcoming book may make you independent financially.

We all missed you and are glad you returned without any misfortune.

Yours Sincerely,
HARRIET M. CLOUSE.

Accompanying this letter is a newspaper extract in which appears the following:

"The Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Church Extension has published figures showing that the churches of the United States are building and dedicating fifteen churches every day."

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Send your orders for Dog Fennel in the Orient and help sell the list.

IT MAY HAPPEN ANY TIME. That you will desire information regarding the great Louisville territory. We have attractive booklets that are just the thing and from which much can be learned. Let us send them to you that you may know the great possibilities for profit in the section traversed by the line of the M. K. & R. Y. Address

"KATY,"

600 Wainwright Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

Friscio System

WILL HAVE ON SALE AT—

St Louis & Memphis

CHEAP ONEWAY AND ROUND

TRIP Homeseekers' Rates.

THE ASPIRATION

Of My Life Is to Get Those 10,000 Subscribers for the Blade.

The Blue Grass Blade, as a newspaper, has now come up to the standard that I aspired to make it when I began it, and is much more than I really ever expected to attain. It is devoted to the greatest cause on earth and it has the finest writers on earth to defend that cause.

It has now attained such a prominence that my death would not make it lose a single issue. No infidel publication of the world has ever achieved such endless variety in the presentation of its causes, and the popularity of the paper is continually increasing. There is only one thing about it that hurts me and that hurts pretty badly; and that is that my friends do not cure the 10,000 subscribers that I ask for, when they ought to do it and could do it and not half for it.

A discussion like that between Dr. Pohl and Mr. Mullen ought to be read by a million people. The trouble with our people is that they are not willing to make sacrifice for our cause. Each one stands back and waits for someone else to do what they all ought to be doing, when each one should take pride in making sacrifice for it.

The Christmas started out at the beginning of this century to raise \$20,000,000 to make the greatest religious revival the world ever saw. They claimed long ago to have gotten nearly that amount. They were either lying about it, or the preachers told the money, for we have not only not had any great religious revival, but have seen no special effort to have one.

The Blade has over 4,000 subscribers and asks for only \$2.00, and I will be simply disgraced if the 10,000 readers of the Blade do not raise for this great cause as small a sum as that—only 23.13 cents each. As soon as you have received 100 subscribers I am satisfied that with that many I can get 25,000 subscribers and then I would like to have the Blade at 50 cents a single copy and 25 cents in issue of five and more, and would then get 25,000 subscribers.

It is certainly very discouraging to me that with all I have written on this subject it remains a fact that no man or woman who is prominent in infidel propaganda has even written a single line or sent a single cent to help in that work. It is the severest cut I have ever had in all my work in this cause. I do not ask for a cent of your money. I don't even want to see it, and don't see it. I have sacrificed every financial interest I have in the cause, and in my old age my home is mortgaged and is for sale. I want the honor of dying a poor man and not want my wife or children to be rich, because being rich does not make people good or happy and they use it as the infidel Carnegie does.

But this is not justice to me. Your praise of me is very kind and as far as it goes, but that is a small matter. You cannot reasonably expect anybody to do more for this paper. Mr. Hughes has to live and has to have money to publish this paper, and it is not fair to do not say your privilege—it is your duty as men and women. If you really appreciate the importance of this matter, to read subscribers for this paper and send the money at 50 cents apiece in issue of five and more, and send this money now and get it back the best way you can, if you want to do so, but send it in issue of five or more, and even if you want to make a sacrifice to do so. Please "get busy" and arouse yourselves to the importance of this matter.

With all the villainy being exposed in the infidel and maligning of the Pope, almost any infidel household girl is saying more to keep up her church than the biggest people among us infidels. Every infidel household has no disinterested man that gives them that feeling.

These people consider the had "Why I Am an Atheist."

We have got to quit blowing our selves and go to work on the some things. I do not intend to print another one of them after this appears in the Blade. I have just received one of these atheistic letters from Judge Patrick B. Ladd, of Alameda, California. He is a great man with a great brain, and his avowal of Atheism is very significant. It goes to show that this is the truest of the most competent infidel thought at this day and Athelism is the thing with which to meet our Christianity. It has been all right and this symposium has put the Blue Grass Blade at the very head of the most advanced thought in the world. But Judge Ladd waited until he saw how the "cat had jumped" and then he writes his little piece, announcing his Athelism, but after all I have said about increasing the circulation of the Blade he does not even allude to that subject. It is in this matter of course, I will have to print just what they are willing to write; but the thing that I would rather print in an inch says that the writer sends \$2.50 for five subscribers for the Blade. I will print three columns of the most magnificent "wind jamming" that was ever written.

If there is any "wind jamming" to be done I can do that myself. The Blade will subside and you all can go along with your former style of writing. I have written a long letter for publication. He has a brilliant science for getting 10,000 subscribers for the Blade Magazine as soon as one or two issues of it can be gotten out. It is to fill that magazine with all of those things that he has to write about that he says will occupy about a year.

I don't know what the things are, for I do not know the meanings of the words in the names of them.

I would rather be in hell half-footed than to edit such a magazine. If I could make \$10,000 a year by it, I would not touch it. The trouble with the matter of any such church and infidelity thing as money in connection with all this. On the one hand, if it is needed in the church, and it is true that this National Liberal Party assume the lead.

Every Liberal should go prepared to deliver an oration, or to make a few remarks, or to read some extract from the speeches of Col. Ingersoll, for present convenience we offer the following:

(1) Addresses by the President of the Year.
(2) Music (if it can be arranged for).
(3) Biographical sketch of Col. Ingersoll.
(4) Reading or Recitation; Declaration of the Free.
(5) Music.
(6) Reading: Extracts from Liberty of Man, Woman and Child.
(7) Miscellaneous Extracts.
(8) Music.
(9) Eulogy by the Orator of the Day.

The above programme may be added any other feature desired by those attending. If no speaker can be procured, the music may be supplied by one of Mr. Ingersoll's lectures, or one or more of the many masterly eulogies which were printed in our Liberal Journal after his death.

J. B. WILSON, President.
Send reports to Morris Saxe, Sec. of the Atlas Bank Building, Cincinnati, Ohio.

PASSING OF THE POPE.

By Robert Montfort Lucky.

Peace be still

The Pope is passing

To the Spirit's silent bourn

The Nations faintly come to mourn

Along the stillness of his bier.

His reign is done. And

Mid the heaped hoarded portions

Amid a pauper's hand of hell.

He lies in state, the potentate,

He marks out a memory

Portentous sounds the ages message.

But Nature on exalted throne

Controlled still all those who come

To smile and sleep in mortal realm.

And pass beyond its solemn border.

Peace be still

The Christ is passing

As the steam of vapor goes.

The fire is out, naught but ashes

Prove existence of the dead.

What the fabled greed consumed

The brains and brawn of human kind.

Peace be still

The King is passing

Appointed King of human creed.

In whose border chambers moaning

Men have perished in the gloom.

Men have sped the path to doom;

Flames alone are moaning answer

To the wanderers lost quest.

Peace be still

The man is passing

Nature laid upon the heights

To fold within maternal bosom

The remnant of the fallen world.

While Clie on the Century's scroll

Inscribes the blackness of his reign.

Williamstown, Ky.

DEFENSES SOCIALISM.

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In favor of complete separation of church and State. Both opposed to class privileges. Both stand for freedom of speech and press. Both strive to uplift the human race and better the condition of mankind.

In the great impending struggle between capital and labor that confronts the American people today, that is destined to plunge this nation into the most dreadful revolution of modern times, the Blade has taken her stand on the side of capital. The downfall of capitalism will be the downfall of ecclesiastical persecution and power, and that is all we Free-thinkers care to accomplish, so far, as the church is concerned.

I am just beginning to study Socialism and may be wrong in suggesting a union of forces. Will some of the older and better informed brethren or sisters express themselves on the matter? It is noted that Socialists have been very liberal takers of the books which I have had for distribution, The Age of Reason and Facts Worth Knowing, which indicates that there is some congeniality between Socialists and Liberals.

JESSE RUSSELL.

Hardyville, Ky.

Enough on the "Juse."

Burk, Idaho, July 15, 1903.

Brother Moore:

Sir I see that you are as Baid as the christians are on the Juse question now that the ant and god them haven't now for any long time.

Just does by kien them, a Jue now's (illegible) now's no kindness now's no thing, they have feth On all of the hard times Weh Strikes the Country, we rob the poor people, it was the Jues that feth on the Bore wore which (illegible) those people of the land and murdered those women and children. In that land they has much on Jew here (illegible) tells me that it is the Jue students in the schools which cause all the trubl, then Go out and ravish the rushe woman and girls ever on and syble.

I don't hear the press ain one thing about those Jue Marling Girls in new York and putting them in Huses Of all fam som of them have hax as 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

What the fabled greed consumed

The brains and brawn of human kind.

Peace be still

The Christ is passing

As the steam of vapor goes.

The fire is out, naught but ashes

Prove existence of the dead.

What the fabled greed consumed

The brains and brawn of human kind.

Peace be still

The King is passing

Appointed King of human creed.

In whose border chambers moaning

Men have perished in the gloom.

Men have sped the path to doom;

Flames alone are moaning answer

To the wanderers lost quest.

Peace be still

The man is passing

Nature laid upon the heights

To fold within maternal bosom

The remnant of the fallen world.

While Clie on the Century's scroll

Inscribes the blackness of his reign.

Williamstown, Ky.

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